

Metaphor and gesture: What's new?

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Shortly after the publication of *Metaphors We Live By*, the psychologists David McNeill and Elena Levy (1982) were the first to apply Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) work in research on speakers' gestures, by claiming that some uses of gesture could be seen as being motivated by underlying metaphoric mappings. McNeill (1985, 1992) developed this idea more extensively, particularly noting how when introducing a topic (e.g., "it was a Sylvester and Tweety cartoon"), speakers may position their hands open and facing each other in the space in front of them, as if holding something invisible between them. A number of researchers pursued this line of inquiry in subsequent years (e.g., Calbris 1990; Cienki 1998; Müller 1998; Sweetser 1998; Webb 1997), pointing out the diversity of source domains that might be expressed spatially in gesture, and the corresponding variety in target domains that might be referred to.

The volume *Metaphor and Gesture* provided a state-of-the-art overview of such research up to 2008. Since then, investigations have proceeded in a variety of different directions; they include work from the perspectives of cognitive psychology and cognitive science, linguistics, cultural anthropology, organizational studies, educational studies, philosophy, and dance. Against the background of this research, we will consider a number of questions, including the following.

- How is gesture being approached in different studies (as opposed to how language is being analyzed) for purposes of metaphor analysis? What kinds of methods are being used in different fields for researching metaphor in gesture?
- How does the multifunctionality of gesture provide challenges for metaphor analysis? Can they be resolved, or is gesture's multifunctional nature an endemic problem for such research?
- How can gesture analysis contribute to the study of metaphor foregrounding and backgrounding in communication?

The talk aims to provide an introduction for those unfamiliar with this field of research, and an update for those who are already 'old hands' in looking at metaphor in gesture.

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